

# The Ford International Weekly THE DEARBORN INDEPENDENT

By the  
Year \$1.50

Dearborn, Michigan, February 12, 1921

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## Lincoln, the Man

**I**T WAS the human side of Abraham Lincoln, as best portrayed in his everyday life, which endeared him so strongly to the great mass of the people. He was one of them, with the same desires and ambitions, sorrows and perplexities, which beset the average man and woman. He knew from bitter experience the difficulties encountered in the fight against poverty and discouragement. He was never too busy nor too much occupied with the cares of the nation, to lend a helping hand or speak an encouraging word when the occasion presented itself. His simplicity of character was exemplified by his rules for living, which a writer has given as:

"Do not worry, eat three square meals a day, say your prayers, be courteous to your creditors, keep your digestion good, steer clear of biliousness, exercise, go slow and go easy. There may be other things that your special case requires to make you happy, but, my friend, these I reckon will give you a good lift."

It was not the office that made Lincoln great. It was not the fact that several millions of his countrymen chose him to be their leader, and placed him in the presidential chair which gives luster to his character. The qualities which caused him to be acclaimed the leader, he possessed when he was teaching school, and splitting rails, and reading law in a judge's musty office. From the beginning he was a man among men who always upheld the right, advocated justice for the oppressed, and a square deal for all.

It was Lincoln the Man, and not Lincoln the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, who would spend hours, which should have been devoted to sleep, going over the records of a court-martial of a boy who had been found

asleep at his post, hoping that he might find some extenuating circumstances which would palliate, in a measure, the boy's offense. It was Lincoln the Man who would take his pen and write across the record, "Pardoned," and give that boy back to his mother, feeling in his great heart that a higher justice had been served.

It was Lincoln the Man, of whom the story is told that once while driving through the woods, he stopped the carriage, and himself picked up a nest which had fallen from a tree and replaced it with its nestlings in the crotch of the limb.

"If I had not put the nest back," he said, "I would not have slept that night, thinking of the mother bird; because I know how I would have felt if such a thing had happened to my own children."

It was Lincoln the Man, rather than Lincoln the Statesman, who signed the Proclamation of Emancipation, thereby freeing a million of his fellow beings from the shackles which had bound them, body and soul.

It was the Man Lincoln who, looking down the years with his keen vision, could see the day, far distant, but surely coming, when there would again be no North or South, but one united country, and uttered as a prayer the words of his Gettysburg address, which ended with the appeal:

"It is rather for us that we be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

—Frank Dorrance Hopley.

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